

In Memoriam

Nelson Butters, Ph.D.

May 7, 1937–November 18, 1995

The International Neuropsychological Society and the Editorial Board of *JINS* mourn the passing of Nelson Butters. Nelson died on Saturday, November 18, 1995 after a three year struggle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Nelson's passing deprives neuropsychology of one of its true geniuses. In the many fields of inquiry that he touched – Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, and alcoholism – to name but a few, he brought his incomparable ability to bridge insights from the neurosciences and cognitive psychology to illuminate disease processes through advances in human clinical neuropsychology.

This is not the time nor the place to enumerate Nelson's astounding scholarly accomplishments. Rather, it may be the place to emphasize what may be his most lasting contribution – his mentorship of young people to continue and enlarge on his spirit of inquiry. Many INS members and members of the *JINS* Editorial Board were graduate students, postdoctoral students, or received other forms of supervision from Nelson. He was known as an exacting professor, one who would brook no fools. But those who came to him with genuine curiosity, with a creative spirit, who persevered – those people engendered his unqualified support – and many of them now are assuming leadership roles in neurosciences and neuropsychology. Therefore, though the sound may be gone from Nelson's voice, the light of his intellect continues to shine through the work of his students.

Nelson was also a towering figure within the INS. A member since the Society's earliest days, he served as our President from 1984–1985, was Secretary-Treasurer from 1974–1977, Treasurer from 1980–1983, a member of our Board of Governors from 1978–1981, and the INS Editor for the *Journal of Clinical Experimental Neuropsychology* (1989–1992). In these and his many other contributions to the INS he will always be remembered with great admiration, and his passing leaves a void that shall be hard to fill.

No remembrance of Nelson would be complete without a comment on him as a family person. Despite his



fame, despite his busy schedule, despite the many demands on his time, he was always a devoted father and husband. Those who knew the Butters family were struck by its closeness and transparent love. This was at no time more obvious than in the last years of his life. Especially, we who were Nelson's friends and professional colleagues express our admiration and deep thanks to Arlene Butters (whom Nelson used to call "my reality check"), who quietly, patiently, and devotedly supported him through his devastating illness and therefore afforded the rest of us the privilege of enjoying his intellect and his professional contributions to the very end.

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